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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), discusses the Reading and Communication Skills Clearinghouse and its role in the ERIC system, and shows journalism teachers and advisors at the high school level how to use the ERIC system. An introduction containing an overview of ERIC is followed by a description of the tools and methods necessary for using the system effectively. The narrative is interspersed with diagrams and figures which further explain the system and how to use it. The article concludes with a sample search of the ERIC system showing a typical search strategy a journalism teacher would follow. (Author)

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A Resource for Journalism Teachers: ERIC

by Rodney J. Barth
ERIC/RCS Staff

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CS 202 008

A RESOURCE FOR JOURNALISM TEACHERS: ERIC

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ERIC/RCS Staff

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information system consisting of 16 clearinghouses under the general sponsorship of the National Institute of Education (NIE). Each clearinghouse is responsible for selecting, analyzing, evaluating, and disseminating educational information and materials in a given area. For example, the Reading and Communication Skills Clearinghouse (ERIC/RCS) is responsible for research, resource, and instructional materials in journalism, reading, English, speech and theater – i.e. the communication skills. The data collected in journalism by ERIC/RCS are available to journalism teachers and advisors in more than 500 ERIC microfiche collections located across the country.

In the area of scholastic journalism, the ERIC system contains information and resources on teaching journalism, advising the school newspaper and yearbook, organizing the journalism staff, preparing editorial guidelines and policies, and instructing students in news-gathering and editing. ERIC contains additional information on the legal aspects of journalism, recent court decisions related to scholastic journalism, freedom of speech, the First Amendment rights of students and teachers, and censorship problems.

Two books recently indexed into the system by the ERIC/RCS Clearinghouse are *Captive Voices–The Report of the Commission of Inquiry Into High School Journalism* by Jack Nelson and *Student Press Rights* by Robert Trager. The first of these, prompted by the Kennedy Commission, was published by Schocken Books; the second was published by the Journalism Education Association in cooperation with ERIC/RCS. Other materials in the ERIC system include transcripts of speeches, papers on teaching methods, research reports, conference and convention proceedings, literature review, inservice and preservice workshop information, curriculum guides and journal articles.

In order to use the ERIC system to best advantage, each teacher needs a working concept on how to retrieve information. It does not take the skills of a librarian to acquire valuable information from the ERIC system, although a brief explanation from a librarian may be in order for the beginner. The effective user of ERIC will need to be familiar with the tools of the ERIC system. These tools include the *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors, Resources in Education,* and *Current Index to Journals in Education.*

The Journalism Education Association is associated with ERIC/RCS in an effort to enable JEA members to have more infromation and assistance to aid them in professional teaching.

The ERIC system is designed to enable teachers in the classroom to have the latest and most important information needed to increase their teaching abilities and information. It is not designed *only* for the researcher – but mainly the front-line teacher.

JEA is represented on the ERIC/RCS advisory board which meets yearly to set policy and priorities. JEA furnishes several persons to review potential journalism and mass communicatiens material for inclusion in the ERIC system. And JEA cooperates with ERIC/RCS in the publishing of materials such as *Student Press Rights* by Robert Trager.

This article by Rodney J. Barth was written at JEA's request and it should enable JEA members to more fully use the information system to improve their classroom teaching.

THE TOOLS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM

The *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors* is the key to the entire system. This thesaurus, which is continuously updated to maintain accuracy, is the source of all subject terms (descriptors) used for indexing and for retrieval of documents and journal articles in the ERIC collection. (See Figure 1.)

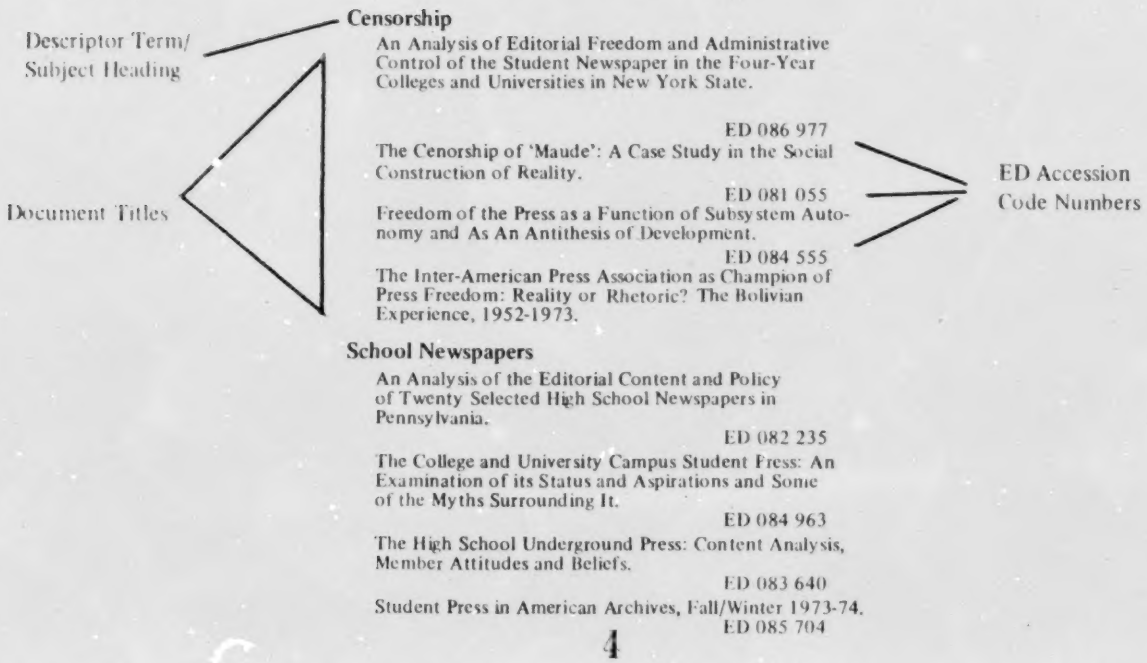
Figure 1 from *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors*

	Journalism	
Narrower Term(s)	NT	News Reporting
Broader Term(s)	BT	Technology
Related Term(s)	RT	Composition (literature)
		Courses
		Editing
		French Literature
		Language Arts
		Layout (publications)
		Mass Media
		Occupations
		Publications
		Radio
		Spanish American Literature
		Spanish Literature
		Television
		Writing
	Censorship	
	RT	Academic Freedom
		Moral Issues
		Moral Values
		Sanctions
	School Newspapers	
	BT	Newspapers
		School Publications
	RT	Class Newspapers
		Cocurricular Activities
		Schools

Each item entered in the ERIC system is assigned several descriptors selected from the *Thesaurus* that reflect the essential subject matter contained in the document. Descriptors marked by an asterisk (*) indicate the major concepts of the document, while the unmarked descriptors denote concepts of only minor emphasis in the document. In cases where no descriptor adequately describes some important feature of a document, an 'identifier' may be assigned in addition to the descriptors. When an identifier is used frequently, as was the case with 'News Reporting', a clearinghouse (in this case ERIC/RCS) submits it as a new descriptor for inclusion in the *Thesaurus* as part of the updating process mentioned earlier. Examples of descriptors journalism teachers and advisors will find useful include: 'Student Publications,' 'School Newspapers,' 'Journalism,' 'Headlines,' 'News Reporting,' 'Student Rights,' 'Yearbook,' 'Freedom of Speech,' 'Court Litigation,' and 'Censorship.' 'First Amendment' can be found as an identifier. Other journalism related descriptors may be located by consulting the *Thesaurus*.

The abstracts of documents thus indexed are printed in *Resources in Education (RIE)* which is published each month. About 1,000 documents from the 16 ERIC Clearinghouses are indexed and summarized in each monthly

Figure 2 Subject Index from RIE


Descriptor Term/
Subject Heading
Document Titles
Censorship
An Analysis of Editorial Freedom and Administrative Control of the Student Newspaper in the Four-Year Colleges and Universities in New York State.
ED 086 977
The Cenorship of 'Maude': A Case Study in the Social Construction of Reality.
ED 081 055
Freedom of the Press as a Function of Subsystem Autonomy and As An Antithesis of Development.
ED 084 555
The Inter-American Press Association as Champion of Press Freedom: Reality or Rhetoric? The Bolivian Experience, 1952-1973.
ED Accession
Code Numbers
School Newspapers
An Analysis of the Editorial Content and Policy of Twenty Selected High School Newspapers in Pennsylvania.
ED 082 235
The College and University Campus Student Press: An Examination of its Status and Aspirations and Some of the Myths Surrounding It.
ED 084 963
The High School Underground Press: Content Analysis, Member Attitudes and Beliefs.
ED 083 640
Student Press in American Archives, Fall/Winter 1973-74.
ED 085 704

volume. Each RIE also contains a main entry section and a subject index, an author index, and a source index (institution or publisher). The subject index is arranged alphabetically by descriptors. Documents which have been assigned a particular term as a major descriptor are listed in the subject index under that term. (See Figures 2 and 3) Thus, a document which has been assigned five major descriptors will be found in five places in the subject index. In each place, the title and a six-digit ED (for ERIC Document) accession number are listed. Semiannual and annual compilations of RIE are also available. Before January 1975, RIE represented *Research in Education*. But the title was changed to *Resources in Education* in order to more accurately reflect its contents. The organization and contents remained unchanged.

Most documents abstracted in RIE are available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS) in two forms: microfiche (MF), a four-by-six inch microfilm card containing up to 96 pages of text; or hard copy (HC), six-by-eight inch, black and white photographically reproduced pages in a paper binding. A few documents listed in RIE are not available from EDRS. In these cases, ordering information and current price are listed with the abstract in the main entry section.

Articles from nearly 600 educational journals are indexed in the same manner in another ERIC publication, *Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE)*. (See Figure 4.) These articles are assigned a six-digit EJ (for Educational Journal) accession number and are often annotated. Semiannual and annual compilations of CIJE are available. Copies of the journal articles indexed in CIJE are not available from ERIC; they must be obtained from a library collection or from the publisher.

Figure 3 Main Entry from RIE

ED Number — **ED 094 416** CS 201 479

Author — *Nelson, Jack*

Title — Captive Voices: The Report of the Commission of Inquiry Into High School Journalism.

Date — Robert F. Kennedy Memorial, Washington, D.C. Pub Date 74
Note—255p

Availability and Price — Available from—Schocken Books, 200 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10016 ($10.95 cloth, $1.45 paper)
Document Not Available from EDRS.

Descriptor Terms — Descriptors—*Censorship, Conference Reports, Court Litigation, *Freedom of Speech, Guidelines, *Journalism, Mass Media, Minority Groups, National Surveys, *School Newspapers, Secondary Education, *Student Publications.

Identifiers — Identifiers—*Commission of Inquiry Into High School Journalism.

Abstract — Contained in this report are the results of a national inquiry conducted by the Commission of Inquiry Into High School Journalism (sometimes called the Kennedy Commission), which examined the current status of high school journalism. Contents include 'Censorship,' which summarizes the different kinds of censorship uncovered by the commission; 'Minority Participation,' which cites some of the problems students from racial, cultural, and ethnic minorities face in joining the journalism staff; 'Journalism and Journalism Education,' which discusses the low priority given journalism and journalism education by high school administrations; 'Established Media,' which examines the lack of encouragement given by the print and electronic media, which are dependent on the continuous flow of talent coming out of high schools; and 'Towards Action,' which lists the recommendations of the commission to ameliorate the present conditions. The document concludes with three appendixes containing guidelines for high school journalism, the results of survey analyses, and selected readings (RB)

SEARCHING ERIC: A CASE STUDY

A hypothetical case study on censorship which incorporates the previously introduced tools, terms, and diagrams in a search of the ERIC system follows.

John Smith has accepted a position teaching high school journalism with the stipulation that he serve as faculty advisor to the school newspaper. The student editor has approached Mr. Smith with the suggestion that the newspaper run a series of articles on drug use and abuse in the community. Smith, concerned with community reaction and administrative policy toward controversial issues, needs more information on censorship and journalistic responsibility in high school newspapers before he considers the editor's proposal. Smith has heard about the ERIC system and plans to spend some time investigating it with the hope of uncovering some information that will help him establish guidelines for the newspaper's editorial policy.

Smith's first step is to phrase, as narrowly and accurately as possible, the question he seeks to answer: 'What news is fit (and allowable) to print in the high school press?' Smith will be looking for information on censorship policies in the high school press, on responsible journalism, and on freedom of speech.

The next task is for Smith to determine the descriptors he will use to conduct his search. He goes to the *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors*

and first looks under the term 'Journalism.' He finds a list of terms under 'Journalism' which are divided into several categories under the notations BT, NT, and RT, which indicate those terms that are narrower than (NT), broader than (BT), or related to (RT) the term 'Journalism.' Each of the terms listed under these abbreviations is itself a descriptor. This cross-listing enables a searcher to quickly identify other possible descriptors that might be useful in a search.

In this case Smith picks 'Writing' and 'Publications' from the related term list as terms he feels are applicable to his search. Although Smith does not find any useful descriptors listed under 'Writing' in the *Thesaurus*, under 'Publications' he finds 'School Publications.' Listed as an NT under 'School Publications' is the term 'School Newspapers.' Smith also discovers that the term 'Censorship' is listed in the *Thesaurus*. Since Smith feels he has found the appropriate descriptors ('School Newspapers and 'Censorship'), he looks under these terms in the Subject Index of the latest cumulative index of RIE.

From the titles of the documents listed in the Subject Index, Smith determines whether or not he is interested in reading the abstracts. If he is, he turns to the Document Resumes section of RIE. By reading each of the abstracts, he can decide which ERIC documents he is interested in reading in their entirety. Smith can then read those documents available on microfiche on the microfiche reader in his library. If he wishes, he can order either microfiche or paper copy reproductions using ordering instructions available in each issue of RIE. By careful reading, in RIE, the abstracts of those documents not available on microfiche Smith can determine if he would like to purchase copies of the documents. He records the ordering information included with the abstracts of those documents he wants to order.

Smith can also obtain a list of references from educational journals relevant to his topic by using the same descriptors for searching the *Current Index to Journals in English (CIJE)*. CIJE entries include brief annotations whenever an article's title is not indicative of its content. However, in order to read the entire article, Smith must either obtain it from the library or order it from the journal publisher.

By now, Smith has obtained a significant body of information on the subject in which he is interested. He may continue to pursue information or decide that what he has found

Figure 4 Main Entry from CIJE

EJ Number
Article Title and Author
Journal, Volume
Descriptors
Annotations

EJ 102 415 CS 701 289
Four-Letter Words: Use in Publications? Steinberg, Hattie, *Communication: Journalism Education Today*, v7, pp9, Spr 74
*Journalism, *School Newspapers, *Freedom of Speech, *Censorship, Secondary Education, (*Obscene Language)
Puts the current use of expletives in perspective for high school journalism students and publication staffs. (RB)

EJ 102 416 CS 701 290
Professionals Must Work with Secondary Journalists Cunningham, Dick, *Communication: Journalism Education Today*, v7, pp10-11, Spr 74
*Journalism, *Student Publications, *Censorship, *Freedom of Speech, Secondary Education
Argues that professional journalists must work with high school journalists and journalism organizations to prevent interference of press freedome in high school publications (RB)

is sufficient to enable him to draw up guidelines for determining responsibility of the school newspaper to print articles such as the series on drugs.

OTHER RESOURCES

Low-cost computer searches of the ERIC system are available throughout the country from both public and private search services, and Smith could have used one of these services had he so desired.

Listed below are the location of the computer search services:

ERIC/Career Education
204 Gabel Hall
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115
Phone: 815-753-1251

ERIC/Counseling & Personnel
2108 Education Bldg.
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Phone: 313-764-9492

ERIC/Disadvantaged
Box 40
Columbia University
Teachers College
525 W. 120th St.
New York, NY 10027
Phone: 212-678-3438

ERIC/Early Childhood Develop.
College of Education
University of Illinois
805 W. Pennsylvania Ave.
Urbana, IL 61801
Phone: 217-333-1386

ERIC/Educational Management
University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403
Phone: 503-686-5043

ERIC/Handicapped & Gifted Child.
The Council for Exceptional Child.
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091
Phone: 703-620-3660

ERIC/Higher Education
George Washington University
One Dupont Circle, Suite 630
Washington, D.C. 20036
Phone: 202-296-2597

ERIC/Information Resources
Center for Research & Development in Teaching
Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305
Phone: 415-321-2300, ext. 3345

ERIC/Junior Colleges
Room 96, Powell Library
University of California
405 Hilgard Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90024
Phone: 213-825-3931

ERIC/Languages and Linguistics
Modern Language Association of America
62 Fifth Ave.
New York, NY 10011
Phone: 212-741-7863

ERIC/Reading and Communication Skills
National Council of Teachers of English
1111 Kenyon Rd.
Urbana, IL 61801
Phone: 217-328-3870

ERIC/Rural Education and Small Schools
Box 3AP
New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, NM 88003
Phone: 505-646-2623

ERIC/Science, Math and Environmental Educ.
400 Lincoln Tower
Ohio State University
1800 Cannon Drive
Columbus, OH 43210
Phone: 614-422-6717

ERIC/Social Studies & Social Science Educ.
855 Broadway
Boulder, CO 80302
Phone: 303-443-1383, ext 8434

ERIC/Teacher Education
American Assn. of Colleges for Teacher Educ.
One Dupont Circle, Suite 616
Washington, D.C. 20036
Phone: 202-293-7280

ERIC/Tests, Measurement & Evaluation
Educational Testing Service
Princeton, NJ 08540
Phone: 609-921-9000, ext. 2691

To find out the ERIC computer search service nearest to you, you may write ERIC/RCS at 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana, IL 61801.

Sample prices for materials from the ERIC document service are 75 cents for microfiche of a document running between 1 and 479 pages. For hard copy, the price runs $1.50 for 1-25 pages, $5.40 for 101-125 pages. Postage is added to these prices.

USING THE ERIC SYSTEM

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills is sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English in cooperation with the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. ERIC's objective is to keep educators informed about current developments in education. Information collected by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills and the other ERIC clearinghouses can be ordered from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS), P.O. Box 190, Arlington, VA 22210. For complete ordering information consult the monthly issues of *Resources in Education* (RIE).

Documents with ED numbers are indexed in *Resources in Education*. Those with EJ numbers are indexed in *Current Index to Journals in Education* (CIJE). And those with CS numbers are recently acquired materials; ED or EJ numbers will soon be assigned.